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PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF THE EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF BIG BEND REPORT 08-02

Results in Brief

In accordance with Florida Statutes 411.01(4) (l), the Agency for Workforce Innovation (the Agency) conducted a performance review of the Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region, Inc. (the coalition, the Big Bend Coalition). The on-site review took place the week of September 10-13, 2007. The review examined the coalition's operations from July 2006 through September 2007.

The Big Bend Coalition's overall implementation of early learning programs is commendable in meeting most service delivery and operational requirements. In many aspects of program implementation, the coalition is operating its programs in a manner that complies with or exceeds most state and federal rules and regulations. The review team found that the coalition is effectively serving the children in the Big Bend area who are enrolled in Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) and School Readiness (SR) programs. Some notable observations include the following:

- Well-developed child care provider and parental support.
- Coalition recognition for leadership in non-profit business.
- Clear and innovative presentation of board agenda and minutes.
- Increased awareness of coalition services through community outreach programs.
- Level 1 certification obtained by additional staff.
- Direct access to services for children with special needs achieved through unique relationship with health and developmental specialists.

There are issues in the areas of governance and operations, grant award and contract management, and resource and referral, however, that could detract from the coalition's success if not addressed in a timely manner. The issues include the following:

- Inadequate follow up regarding new board member orientation.
- No formal protocols for public records requests.
- Missing required confidentiality language in memoranda of agreement.
- Poor performance in key areas of child care resource and referral service delivery.

The Agency's Eligibility Support and Fraud Prevention Unit conducted a review of eligibility determinations for the Big Bend Coalition. The program findings and best practices were published in a separate report on February 12, 2008.

Scope and Methodology

Florida law requires “the Agency for Workforce Innovation to monitor and evaluate the performance of each early learning coalition in administering the school readiness program, implementing the coalition's school readiness plan, and administering the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program. These monitoring and performance evaluations must include, at a minimum, on-site monitoring of each coalitions’ finances, management, operations, and programs.”[s. 411.01(4)(l), F.S., s. 1002.75(1), F.S., and 45 CFR 98.11(b)(6)]. Additionally, Florida Statutes s. 411.01(4) (m) gives the Agency authority to “identify best practices of early learning coalitions in order to improve the outcomes of school readiness programs.”

To accomplish this, the Agency developed performance expectations to provide a framework for measuring a coalition’s effectiveness in implementing early learning programs (see *Appendix A—Indicators, Expectations, and Excerpts from Standard Levels of Service*). The performance expectations include indicators relating to compliance with state and federal laws and regulations, as well as indicators for additional activities that could assist coalitions in maintaining high quality programs and operations. Specific areas of program implementation covered by the expectations are governance and operational processes, grant award and contract management, program access and availability, and educational service delivery (s. 411.01(4)(l), F.S.).

In addition, the Agency developed the *Child Care Resource & Referral Network CCR&R Standard Levels of Service* (Standard Levels of Service), which a local coalition should meet in delivering resource and referral services to families. The standards address issues such as customer service expectations, staff training and certification, consumer services and information, and database maintenance. See *Appendix A—Indicators, Expectations, and Excerpts from Standard Levels of Service* for a more detailed description of the Standard Levels of Service.

To measure the extent to which the Big Bend Coalition is meeting the performance expectations and the Standard Levels of Service (SLS), the review team interviewed the coalition executive director, coalition staff, board members, parents, and providers. The team examined various documents, such as the coalition’s contracts, board meeting minutes, mini-grant program guidelines, provider agreements, written policies and procedures, coalition reports, and analyzed various data contained in the Enhanced Field System (EFS). Additionally, the review teams visited several child care provider sites and conducted focus groups for parents and providers receiving services from the coalition.

Background

History of Operations. The Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region began operations in 2000 as the Leon County School Readiness Coalition and the Gadsden School Readiness Coalition. In 2004, the two coalitions merged to form the Leon and Gadsden School Readiness Coalition. During fiscal year 2005-2006, the coalition’s service delivery area was expanded to serve seven counties in the Big Bend region of Florida, which includes Leon, Gadsden, Jefferson, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, and Wakulla counties. The coalition’s service delivery area covers approximately 4,958 square miles. There are approximately 28,546 children birth to 5 years old in the coalition’s seven-county service delivery area; Leon County is the most densely populated. The Big Bend Coalition is the 13th largest coalition in terms of children and families served through the SR and VPK programs; 40% of these families live at 185% below the poverty level. The coalition’s expenditures for the SR and VPK early learning programs for fiscal year 2006-2007 totaled approximately \$25,146,261. Details of key expenditure categories appear in the table below. **Expenditures represent cost categories that support the scope of the performance review and are not all-inclusive.*

Early Learning Coalition of Big Bend Reported SR Expenditures	
Area	2006-2007
Administration (97 BBA and 97LCA)	\$603,809
Resource & Referral (97Q14)	\$251,630
Eligibility Determination (97BDE)	\$442,390
Monitoring w/ other Non-direct services (97BBD, 97CCT, 89JTR, 89JOO)	1,792,039
Inclusion Services (97QIN)	\$14,428
SR Quality Initiatives (97QOO)	\$1,446,675
Infant and Toddler Quality (97INT)	\$366,705
CCEP (97PPA-97PPO)	\$126,150
Gold Seal (97GSD)	\$392,266
Disaster (if applicable) (97HCF-97HKR)	\$0
Program Services (97COO-97TNW, 97RSP; excluding 97LCA & 97GSD)	\$12,222,060
Total Expenditures (for above OCAs only)	\$17,658,152

Source: AWI Grant Management FLAIR Expenditures as of 9/30/07

Early Learning Coalition of Big Bend Reported VPK Expenditures	
Area	2006-2007
Administration (VPKADM)	\$157,113
Enrollments (VPENR)	\$82,765
Monitoring (VPMON & VPMNI)	\$106,369
Outreach and Awareness (VPLCM)	0
Program Services (VPPRS)	\$7,141,862
Total Expenditures (for above OCAs only)	\$7,488,109

Source: AWI Grant Management FLAIR Expenditures as of 9/30/07

Children Served. For fiscal year 2006-2007, the Big Bend Coalition served a total of 7,073 children in the SR program, and 3,053 in the VPK program. The total number of children served in wrap-around care (served jointly in SR and VPK) was 770.

Organization and Staffing. At the time of the on-site review, the coalition had an administrative staff of six employees who were responsible for overseeing and managing the programmatic and fiscal aspects of the coalition’s mission. The staff included the executive director, director of finance, director of operations and systems, director of community outreach, director of fund and contract development, and director of technical assistance and professional development. Twenty-six additional supporting staff were responsible for provider resource and development, child and family services, and volunteer coordination components of the Big Bend Coalition’s service delivery model.

The coalition also had a contract for an early learning specialist in Taylor County as well as memoranda of agreements for health and developmental specialists that provided services throughout the service delivery area. See *Appendix C—Coalition Organizational Structure* for a diagram of the coalition’s organization.

Scope of Services. The Big Bend Coalition provided the following services in house: professional development, volunteer services, inclusion, quality initiatives, and provider monitoring. During the 2006-2007 review period, the coalition’s principal contractors were Arbor Education & Training (Arbor E&T) and the school districts of Leon, Jefferson, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, and Wakulla counties. *Appendix D—Coalition Principal Contracts for 2006-2007* lists the contracts by contractor, services provided, contract period, and amount.

- **The Arbor E&T** contract includes eligibility and enrollment determination, slot management services, provider payments, and Child Care Resource and Referral for all seven counties.
- **The school districts** provide quality initiative services in their respective counties. The services include pre- and post-curriculum assessment, program environment, health and safety monitoring, technical assistance, health and nutrition services, and serving 3- and 4-year-old children in unduplicated slots.

Board Governance. The coalition’s board of directors serves as the policy-making entity for the coalition and delegates authority to the coalition’s executive director. At the time of the review, the 25-member board consisted of five non-voting and 20 voting members representing seven counties in the Big Bend region of Florida. Membership includes representatives from both the private and public sectors. *Appendix B—Board Membership* depicts coalition board membership as submitted on September 11, 2007.

According to the Big Bend Coalition’s bylaws, the board is supported by five standing committees, made up of both voting and non-voting board members. *Appendix C—Committee Membership* depicts committee membership as submitted on September 11, 2007. Descriptions are listed below:

- **The Executive Committee** consists of coalition board officers and standing committee chairs, who are responsible for oversight of the administrative functions of the board, setting agendas, planning and coordinating on issues, and performing needed activities in the best interest of the coalition. The committee also sets the salary and benefits package of the executive director and monitors the coalition’s progress in meeting the vision and mission of the coalition.
- **The Governance Committee** consists of at least four board members, who are responsible for recruiting new board members, new board member orientation, approving and ensuring adherence to the coalition’s

bylaws, ensuring compliance with coalition board requirements, approving standard operating and program policies and procedures, and oversight of human resource functions.

- **The Finance Committee** consists of at least four coalition board members and provides regular monitoring of financial and utilization reports, and budgetary and fiscal policy oversight.
- **The Program Committee** consists of at least four board members as well as additional community partners. This committee assesses the SR needs of the communities it serves, ensures that goals and objectives are met, and ensures that the board adheres to the approved SR plan.
- **The Community Development Committee** consists of at least four board members, who plan and implement outreach strategies that promote community awareness of the SR programs. Outreach is accomplished through publications, materials, and a speaker's bureau. Additionally, the committee is responsible for fostering partnerships and relationships with child care providers, parents, and community partners.

Findings

The following report of findings summarizes notable observations and compliance issues observed by the review analysts. All compliance issues require that the coalition submit a corrective action plan within 30 days of report publication, and a subsequent six month follow-up status report.

Program Access and Availability

Florida Statutes 411.01(4)(o), states that the Agency shall work with a coalition to increase a parent's training for and involvement in a child's preschool education and to provide family literacy activities and programs. Coalitions are responsible for serving a family in the coalition's service areas including families from diverse backgrounds. A family's needs varies, including differences in household income, English speaking skills, and challenges related to a child with a disability and special health care needs.

A coalition is also responsible for ensuring coordinated staff development and teaching opportunities for staff and providers. [s. 411.01(5)(c) 1.c., F.S.] A coalition should collaborate with local community education institutions such as universities, community colleges, and vocational institutions to provide on-going training for provider staff.

The Agency's review of the Program Access and Availability program expectations confirms that the Big Bend Coalition effectively implements the coalition's plan in this review area.

NOTABLE OBSERVATIONS

Child care provider and parental support is well-developed

The Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region established excellent resources and networks for both the child care providers the coalition contracts with and the parents whose children attend SR and VPK programs. The resources include the following:

- **Evening with the Stars.** The "Evening with the Stars" event gets the local community leaders and board members involved in recognizing the Big Bend Coalition local child care providers.
- **Customized database.** The coalition has created a customized provider database called the EL-C, which is designed to track coalition services including provider data, professional development training, child outcomes, volunteer services, quality rating system data, monitoring information, warm line data, and professional development. The database allows information to be captured and used in timely, meaningful ways to positively impact provider and client outcomes.
- **Training and provider information.** Need-based training and technical assistance is available for child care providers through Support Technical Assistance Resources (STAR) classes. STAR is a 10-person team of coalition staff that offers a wide variety of training to all providers in the region. Courses offered include administrative practices, curriculum, learning environments, and professional development. The coalition also holds quarterly provider forums and publishes a quarterly newsletter that contains articles on recent coalition events, special programs, professional development opportunities, and upcoming events.

The coalition, through collaboration with Arbor E&T, has also developed an orientation presentation for new SR providers. The presentation includes an overview of the SR program, identification of different provider types, provider certification resources, provider responsibilities, processing of attendance records, and the provider payment process.
- **Internship recruitment and parental assistance.** Internships are provided to local college students through the Early Literacy Volunteers Instructional Support program, which introduces potential new

instructors and new child care providers to early learning programs. Along with Partners in Literacy, Whole Child Leon, and the Imagination Library, the program also provides support to parents for family literacy and provides opportunities for parent training and skill-building, which help parents be active participants in a child's early education.

- **Community partnerships.** Through the coalition's Professional Development Committee, the coalition has formed strong relationships with such organizations as Kids Incorporated, the Taylor County School Board, Florida State University, Tallahassee Community College, and the Gadsden County Extension Office. These partners meet regularly to share knowledge and resolve issues that would impede an effective service delivery.

The coalition is also a key partner in the Whole Child Leon Professional Network, an initiative supported by local state legislators, county officials, and the United Way. This network provides advocacy and serves as a conduit for implementing project activities. The benefits of the partnership with Whole Child Leon have resulted in the development of a holistic approach to community outreach. Additionally, through Whole Child Leon, the coalition participates in committees such as Quality Education, Physical and Mental Health, and Spiritual Foundation and Strength. As a result, the coalition's efforts to provide information about choosing quality child care and parenting techniques have been enhanced.

COMPLIANCE ISSUES

The Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region has no compliance issues in the *Program Access and Availability* review area.

Governance and Operations

In general the Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region (the coalition, the Big Bend Coalition) has the executive leadership and managerial elements needed to form a strong organizational structure that is responsive to community needs. From a process perspective, the coalition has a board structure that facilitates a strong decision-making process.

The review team, however, identified some practices that could hinder the coalition's progress in clearly articulating key information management functions and providing quality child care services to the Big Bend community if not addressed immediately.

NOTABLE OBSERVATIONS

The coalition is recognized for its leadership in non-profit business operations

The coalition received the 2007 *Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce's Non-Profit Business of the Year Award*. The coalition was one of four finalists chosen out of more than 60 nominees. This level of recognition is indicative of the coalition's positive impact and contribution to the community that the coalition serves.

Board agenda items and meeting minutes are presented in a clearly written, innovative format

Board meeting packets were comprehensive, with back-up documentation that supported the agenda items. The coalition uses a numbering system to order its action items (or items that require a board decision). The indexing of the action items allows the action to be referenced in the back-up documentation and tracked for completion. Except for the more routine actions such as approval of agendas and minutes, the action items are presented in a standard format, which includes an explanation of the action item and a background section.

COMPLIANCE ISSUES

Coalition governance practices may reduce board effectiveness and efficiency

A coalition establishes its own bylaws, including the selection of parliamentary procedures to provide structure and organization for board business and operations. The parliamentary procedures must establish, among other requirements, how the board constitutes a quorum and how motions are presented to the board for decision. The Big Bend Coalition's bylaws set Robert's Rules of Order as a standard for parliamentary procedure for voting members. Some key processes, however, are neglected in actual practice.

- **Board members lack training in Sunshine Law.** Two board members stated they had not been to new member orientation and were not familiar with Sunshine Law requirements. At the time of the on-site review, these two board representatives had been members of the coalition for at least two years. Board members who are unfamiliar with Sunshine Law requirements may unknowingly violate the statute and subject the coalition to legal challenge.
- **Actions by non-voting/non-board members.** During the Executive Committee meeting of August 18, 2006, the school superintendent designee, who is a non-voting member according to s. 411.01 (5) (a) 4-7, F.S., seconded a motion to approve the coalition's plan and also made a motion to refer the slate of officers for the 2006-07

fiscal year to the full board for approval. The Executive Committee, per the coalition’s bylaws, has final action authority.

The Agency’s General Counsel’s opinion at the time of the review stated, “a non-voting member of an early learning coalition may not vote on board business, whether in the full board meeting or in committee.” Non-voting and non-board members, however, may provide input and information to the committee and participate in discussion for matters that will go to the board for consideration. A coalition clearly needs to solicit the feedback and support of a community member who may not sit on the board or a board member who may not have voting privileges.

The Agency’s position, based on the General Counsel’s opinion released in a June 5, 2008, memorandum, is that a non-voting or non-board member should not make a motion or vote on a committee that has final action authority. This position does not apply to committees that do not have final action authority.

- **No formal protocols for public records requests.** The coalition has no written operational procedures or policies that address the handling of an early learning program public records request or statutory exemption regarding an individual record of a child enrolled in the programs. Policies and procedures that document the coalition’s process for current and future staff provides written guidance in the absence of verbal instruction. In the absence of such policies, the coalition becomes vulnerable to mishandling of public records requests, which may include violation of confidentiality statutes or untimely release of sensitive information.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

The coalition should improve Governance and Operations to include the following standards:

- Ensure that all new and existing board members attend training and orientation that includes, but is not limited to, Sunshine Law requirements.
- Adhere to proper parliamentary procedures for voting, non-voting, and non-board members.
- Establish written policies for processing of public records requests.

Grant Awards and Contract Management

To ensure effective and efficient procurement processes, a coalition must have policies and procedures in place to ensure compliance with state and federal laws and regulations, specifically s. 287.057, F.S. To ensure compliance with Florida Statutes, a coalition must maintain all documentation relating to the contract and/or grant award selection process including the method of selection used. Without the proper documentation, there will be insufficient evidence that the proper procedures were followed. Failure to adhere to procurement requirements could result in conflicts of interest, bid protests, and poor quality of work performed by contractors.

The Big Bend Coalition meets most requirements for procuring goods and services, awarding contracts, and performing contract file maintenance. The coalition’s overall procurement process is both systematic and efficient, and serves well in ensuring that contractors deliver contracted services as intended. There is one area of non-compliance that needs to be corrected as explained below.

COMPLIANCE ISSUES

Memoranda of agreement lack language for confidentiality

The coalition has several memoranda of agreement (MOA) with health care professionals and behavioral specialists. While the agreements are innovative, Florida Statutes require a confidentiality clause to be included in any agreement where a party has access to confidential information, including MOAs with licensed healthcare professionals. The following agreements were missing the confidentiality clause:

MOA’s Missing Confidentiality Clauses	
Agreement	Services
Adolph, S.	VPK Training
Beasley, N.	Community Outreach
Fitzgibbons, K.	Screening Consultant
Garbordi, D.	Screening/Assessment Consultant
Goodpasture	Child Care Health Consultant
Graves, L.	QRS Consultant
Hammond, N.	Assessment Consultant
Kids, Inc.	Provider Training
McCort, M.	Provider Training Agreement
Wakulla Dollywood	Imagination Library

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

The coalition should improve Grant Award and Contract Management operations by ensuring the inclusion of confidentiality clauses in all contractual agreements, including memoranda of agreement.

Child Care Resource & Referral

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) should serve as the “front door” to all services offered through the coalition. A parent, regardless of socio-economic status, that seeks or needs financial assistance with child care should receive complete resource and referral services. Every parent should be offered the option of receiving assistance with finding child care and provided information that will help the parent make an informed decision, as well as additional information and community resources as appropriate.

The Big Bend Coalition contracts with Arbor E&T, for CCR&R services. The contract totals \$189,982 and the terms of agreement include; providing child care consumer information, establishing a toll-free telephone system, maintaining and managing a comprehensive database of all early child care and education caregivers and community resources in the Big Bend Region, among other aspects of the CCR&R program.

2006 Coalition Comparison of Completed Referrals		
	BIG BEND	SEMINOLE
Referrals	6,308	1,215
Percentage	10%	2%
0-5 Population	61,324	69,411

SOURCE: CCR&R 2006 COUNTY COMPARISON REPORT

The table above shows the number of completed referrals generated by the coalition’s child care resource and referral service, based on the size of the birth-to-5 year population and in comparison to similarly-sized coalitions. For example, the referrals for the Big Bend Coalition for the 2006 calendar year numbered 6,308 for a birth-to-5-year population of 61,324.6 (10%). In comparison, the Seminole Coalition generated 1,215 referrals for a birth-to-5-year population of 69,411.4 (2%).

NOTABLE OBSERVATIONS

Community outreach programs increase awareness of coalition services

The coalition’s CCR&R program collaborates with several area partners to increase public awareness of early education within the community. The CHILD Program, ELVIS Program, online child care provider education, VPK education and information for providers and parents, Whole Child Leon, Barnes and Noble Book Fair Voucher program, Evening with the Stars, and Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library are components of the Community Education and Outreach Plan for families and providers. Collective endeavors ensure that the coalition meets the coalition’s community outreach goals and continues to promote and provide quality early learning services. Some specific examples of the Big Bend Coalition’s use of community partnerships to make the public aware of the coalition’s programs are illustrated below.

- **Barnes and Noble.** The bookstore hosted a fundraiser in which a portion of the profits from book sales went to the coalition. During the fundraiser, the coalition set up a booth in the store and provided brochures and information about the services the coalition provides.
- **VIP program.** The coalition has a strong early learning Very Important Partners (VIP) program, a volunteer program that encourages businesses and the community to get involved with early learning education. Participants are encouraged to be role models and read to children in child care settings, develop resources for teachers, and help the coalition with community events.
- **CHILD program.** Volunteers in the VIP program also participate in the Communities Helping in Learning and Development (CHILD) program, which focuses on quality early learning experiences to help prepare children for kindergarten. The program supplies reading, writing, and arithmetic kits, as well as backyard science kits to enhance early learning for children in the Big Bend community. Additionally, the program makes it possible for VIPs to “adopt” a playground and help with renovations, repairs, and donations of equipment and supplies. The coalition also asks VIPs to donate supplies for early learning resource centers where child care providers and parents can check out resource books, tapes, and CDs, as well as use on-hand equipment.

Basic resource and referral training requirements extended to additional staff

The coalition and the coalition’s service provider, Arbor E&T, go above and beyond what is required for staff training and emergency planning as detailed below.

Training extended to additional staff. As required by the Standard Levels of Service (SLS), all resource and referral specialists and coordinators are required to obtain a minimum of a Level I Certification to provide resource and referral services to customers. The Big Bend Coalition and its service provider have gone beyond the minimum requirement and has required additional staff who are not in the resource and referral unit to obtain a Level I certification. This ensures that with increased demand the coalition will continue to be able to provide a seamless continuation of resource and referral services within its seven county communities.

COMPLIANCE ISSUES

The coalition’s CCR&R program needs improvement in key aspects of its service delivery

While the overall program referral numbers are high, the Big Bend Coalition needs to address some of the required standards that are not being met as described below. Problems meeting all SLS standards could potentially decrease referral numbers over time and lead to decreased program access for parents and providers within the Big Bend service area.

- **Incomplete updates.** EFS is a database that is required to be used and maintained by all coalitions in the State of Florida. Each individual coalition is responsible for the accuracy of the information entered into the system and for ensuring timely updates. As required by the SLS section III-3a., all legally operating early learning and/or school-age providers (licensed, registered and exempt providers) in all counties within the CCR&R service area must be included in the CCR&R provider database. The analyst noted during the review that 16 legally operating providers were not included in the EFS database. See the next table for missing providers.

Missing Providers	
PROVIDER NAME	
3 R's Academy	Little Red School House
All Aboard Child Care Station	VIP Kids Christian Academy
Sandra Family Day Care Home	Metropolitan Christian Academy
Dilworth Family Day Care Home	Riley Family Day Care Home
Lightfoot Family Day Care Home	Our Blessings Child Care Center
Payne Family Day Care Home	Skipworth Family Day Care Home
Saint Paul's United Methodist Parent's Morning Out	Grambling Family Day Care Home
Sandell Family Day Care Home	Alves Family Day Care Home

- **Incorrect codes.** As required by SLS section II-13d., all resource and referral standard code changes and updates that affect the monthly or quarterly reports must be made within 30 days of the coalition receiving notification by the CCR&R Network. In a review of the CCR&R Network Standard User Codes (codes or standard codes) the analyst noted that there were six EFS code errors. The coalition needs to correct the code errors immediately to ensure the validity and accuracy of the information in EFS. The EFS code errors are described below.

- There are two codes that are “required” for use in the CCR&R database but the coalition is not using. See table below for description of unused codes.

Unused Codes		
TABLE	CODE	STANDARD CODES DESCRIPTION
UNCR	MTH	Monthly
PRPR	MIL	Military

- There are three codes that the coalition has entered incorrectly into a table that has the following instructions: “required, do not change or add any codes.” See table below for incorrect codes and tables.

Incorrect Codes			
TABLE	Correct EFS Codes	COALITION EFS CODE ERRORS	STANDARD CODES DESCRIPTION
UNCR	HRL	NON-VPK HOURLY	Hourly
PAEL	CCEP	CCP	Child Care Executive Partnership
PREV	NEGR	NEG	Negotiated Rate

- There is one code that the coalition has added to a table that has the following instructions: “required, do not change or add any codes.” See table below for added code and table.

Incorrect Codes	
TABLE	ADDED CODE
RQOT	FF

- **Incomplete information.** As required by the SLS section III-1.a and b., when a coalition adds a new provider into the EFS database, the provider must be mailed an informational start-up packet. In a review of the coalition’s *new* and *potential* provider informational packets the review analysts noted that the packets do not contain all of the required information as described below.
 - As required by the SLS section III-2, the written provider statement “*There are no charges/fees associated with a provider listing in the Resource & Referral Database or for referrals to your program. If you are asked to provide a payment for a referral or listing in the Resource & Referral database, please call the Agency for Workforce Innovation-Office of Early Learning Resource & Referral Network at 1-866-357-3239*” must be included with the informational packets the coalition sends to all new providers. Although the written provider statement has been included in the new provider informational packet, the contact information for the Office of Early Learning Resource & Referral Network is incorrect. Additionally, the *new* provider informational packet is missing the following required items:
 - o Local CCR&R brochure
 - o Food Program information
 - o Start-up, zoning, program, and budget development information
 - o Central Directory/Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System
 - o How to access the statewide inclusion toll-free Warm Line (1-866-357-3239).
 - The *potential* provider start-up packet is missing the following required items:
 - o Data about local provider demographics
 - o Information about the OEL CCR&R Network website.
- **Parent packets missing required information.** The parent packets received through secret shopper calls and during the site review include all the standard information required by the SLS section II-6e, except for

the location of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Licensing.

- **Information provided during secret shopper calls is limited.** Secret shopper calls indicated that general access to CCR&R services is not always available, explained, or offered to consumers. Additionally, during an observed parent referral appointment, the counselor did not seem to be knowledgeable of the resources available in the Big Bend area nor did she inquire about whether the child had special needs. Only one out of five counselors who received secret shopper calls advised the secret shopper to visit child care sites before choosing one. One parent counselor did not provide or explain types of child care regulations or discuss quality indicators and the phone call appeared rushed.
- **Inadequate telephone services in outlying counties.** All of the service centers in the Big Bend area except for Taylor and Jefferson counties have telephone systems that use verbal prompts to return a caller to a CCR&R specialist or operator for assistance. Taylor and Jefferson counties do not allow contact with a parent counselor or the option to leave a message for resource and referral services. The deficiency in telephone access limits and delays resource and referral services for a parent.
- **Business hours missing from website and voicemail.** SLS section II-8c and section II-9b, require hours of availability to be included on the coalition’s and/or service contractor’s website and voicemail. The hours of operation for services, however, are not clearly identified on the coalition’s or service contractor’s websites or voicemail messages. The oversight may limit inquiries and cause a decline in the referral process because parents, providers, and other consumers of resource and referral services are not aware of the correct hours of operation.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

The coalition should improve Child Care Resource and Referral operations to include the following standards:

- Ensure EFS standard codes and definitions are input correctly and appropriately used.
- Ensure providers are properly updated in the EFS database according to information provided from the DCF Licensing office.
- Ensure provider packets contain all required information.

- Ensure parent packets contain all required information.
- Ensure phone systems for CCR&R services are always available from a qualified CCR&R specialist during normal hours of operation and all voicemail messages are promptly returned.
- Ensure all CCR&R Specialists receive Customer Service and Quality Training.
- Ensure business hours are accurately posted on the coalition’s and/or service provider’s website, and on voicemail.

Educational Services Delivery

Section 411.01, Florida Statutes provides an outline for a coalition’s SR programs that include ensuring the use of developmentally appropriate curricula by providers, implementing health and developmental screenings and assessments for children participating in the program, coordinating staff development and provider training, and fostering parental support and involvement. A coalition must address these elements as part of the coalition’s SR plans, and the plans must be approved by the Agency.

The Big Bend Coalition effectively meets the coalition’s plan and statutory requirements in this review area, and has implemented a commendable educational service delivery program.

NOTABLE OBSERVATIONS

Unique relationship with health and developmental specialists allows direct access to services for children with special needs

As described below, the Big Bend Coalition has memoranda of agreements (MOA) with several health care professionals to provide screenings, assessments, technical assistance, and follow-up to providers and families. Additionally, the coalition employs a child development specialist to oversee the process of referring a child in the SR program, that falls outside of developmental norms, for additional assessments and services. The following licensed professionals are on staff to ensure that the coalition and the coalition’s child care providers have quick access to necessary services when a child enrolled in the SR program is in need of additional services.

- **The screening consultant** performs, updates, and reviews developmental screenings and assessments for children in the SR program, and also scores and evaluates the screenings and assessments.

- **The licensed nurse practitioner (LPN)** also performs developmental screenings, as well as health screenings including hearing, vision, dental, and speech screenings. Additionally, the LPN works with a parent when a referral is needed and offers educational programs for a family about child health and development. This person also works with child care providers to identify a child who may need health screenings and assists with individualized health care plans for a child diagnosed with health problems. The LPN provides technical assistance and training and is available to child care providers as a consultant.
- **The mental health/behavior consultant** performs, updates, and reviews developmental/behavioral screenings and assessments when a child is referred for a behavioral concern. The consultant provides direct intervention with the child when there is a specific need and develops a plan with the family on how to use intervention techniques at home. The consultant also provides training and technical assistance to child care providers and helps them to develop a plan to work a child. The consultant also works with coalition staff to provide information and research materials about behavioral problems and facilitates referrals to other community agencies.

COMPLIANCE ISSUES

The Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region has no compliance issues in the *Educational Service Delivery* review area.

APPENDIX A—INDICATORS/EXPECTATIONS/STANDARD LEVELS OF SERVICE

Performance Expectations for Governance and Operations

- 1 The coalition clearly delineates the roles and responsibilities of the board and the executive director in order to promote effective working relationships.
- 2 The coalition organizes efficient board meetings that are accessible to the public.
- 3 The coalition clearly defines its organizational structure, including procedures to effectively manage Coalition personnel.
- 4 The coalition's process for managing information supports daily operations.
- 5 The executive director and Coalition board exercise effective oversight of the coalition's financial operations.
- 6 The executive director and Coalition board exercise effective oversight of the coalition's programmatic allocations and development.

Performance Expectations for Grants and Contract Management

- 1 The coalition has policies and procedures to ensure effective and efficient procurement of commodities and services.
- 2 The coalition has policies and procedures to ensure the awarding of a contract is fair, equitable and cost-effective.
- 3 An individual(s) is (are) assigned responsibility for managing Coalition contracts.
- 4 The coalition has policies and procedures in place to monitor both administrative and programmatic aspects of all contracts.

Excerpts from the Standard Levels of Service for Child Care Resource & Referral

Each ELC is responsible for the coordination and/or provision of CCR&R services in their service area. Each ELC must ensure all CCR&R services are provided, including but not limited to the following responsibilities:

- Designating/training/supervising CCR&R Staff
- CCR&R services for all families and providers
- Resources for families and providers (including but not limited to information on resources, VPK, financial assistance, School Readiness, Florida Kid Care Insurance, CCEP, employer initiatives)
- Designating/training/supervising inclusion services/Warm Line staff
- Provider outreach and recruitment
- Community outreach and collaboration
- Reports (Monthly, Quarterly, ad hoc) and community awareness plans
- DCF Reports and Information
- Data collection/updates (for providers/families)
- 1 • Coalition Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)

Excerpts from the Standard Levels of Service for Child Care Resource & Referral (cont.)

- 2 CCR&R Coordinator/designated trainer must use the Quality Assessment form to observe each CCR&R specialist, (including but not limited to School Readiness staff/ELC staff) conducting a complete family interview and generating referrals at least twice a year.
 - The Quality Assessment Roll-up Report must be sent to the CCR&R Network Office during the second and fourth fiscal quarters detailing the staff name, date of assessment, and result (Excellent, satisfactory, poor).
 - The Quality Assessment form must be kept on file at the ELC/R&R office for review by Network staff during assessment visits and/or onsite training/TA visits.
- 3 Each ELC must complete an internal CCR&R Programmatic Assessment. Assistance is available from Coalition analysts and CCR&R Network staff.
- 4 ELC and CCR&R Staff must respond in a timely manner to the AWI-OEL monitoring staff's request for a scheduled monitoring date, be available for interviews, and provide all necessary documents as requested during the monitoring session.
- 5 Work to promote awareness of the Child Care Executive Partnership and other employer initiatives. Training and TA is available upon request. Possible activities may include but are not limited to:
 - Speaking at employer benefit events
 - Speaking at local Chamber of Commerce meetings
 - Speaking at Kiwanis, Rotary, or other service club meetings

Performance Expectations for Educational Service Delivery

- 1 The coalition has a comprehensive plan for improving the educational services of early childhood providers in its service area.
- 2 The coalition supports providers in using curricula that are effective and developmentally appropriate.
- 3 The coalition ensures that providers use pre and post assessment data to make sound decisions about teaching and learning.
- 4 The coalition has identified a process to demonstrate that its board has discussed, chosen, and approved the assessment instrument and implementation process.
- 5 The coalition/service provider has an effective and comprehensive health and developmental screening program that is relevant, utilizes available resources, and facilitates parental participation.
- 6 The coalition has a system in place to offer and track training to all providers for professional development and on the health and developmental screening process.

APPENDIX B—BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Name	Designation	Mandatory/ Voting	Affiliation	Term/Ends
Chris Jensen	Board Chair, Gubernatorial Appt. Private Sector	Yes/Yes	Regions Bank	4 years/April 30, 2009
Vacant	Private Sector, Gubernatorial Appt.	Yes/Yes		
Janice Sumner	Private Sector, Gubernatorial Appt.	Yes/Yes	United Country Realty	3 years/April 30, 2008
Janice Brown	DCF District Administrator designee	Yes/Yes	DCF (all counties)	N/A
Beverly Owens	District Superintendent of schools or designee	Yes/No	Leon County School District	2 years/July 1, 2008
Kimberly Moore*	Regional workforce development board chair/director	Yes/Yes	Workforce Board (Leon, Wakulla & Gadsden)	2 years/September 20, 2007
Shannon Jacobs**	County Health Dept. director or designee	Yes/Yes	Health Department (Jefferson)	N/A
Dr. Barbara Sloan	President of a community college, or designee	Yes/Yes		2 years/July 1, 2008
Sheila Shelton*	Board of county commissioners appointee	Yes/Yes		2 years/September 20, 2007
Vacant	Head Start director	Yes/No		N/A
Sabrina Parga**	Private provider representative	Yes/No		2 years/September 20, 2007
Sara McElroy**	Faith-based provider representative	Yes/No		2 years/September 20, 2007
Catherine McRae	Disabilities Education Act, program representative	Yes/No	Leon County School Board (FDLRS)	2 years/March 14, 2008
Vacant	Central child care agency administrator	Yes/No	Arbor E&T	N/A
Joe Alexander	Child Care Licensing Agency, Head	Yes/Yes	Local Licensing Agency (all counties)	N/A
Dr. Elsie Burton*	Private Sector Business	Yes/Yes	Leon	3 years/July 1, 2007
Maureen Daughton	Private Sector Business	Yes/Yes	Leon	2 years/July 1, 2008
Joyce Bethea*	Private Sector Business	No/Yes	Madison	2 years/September 20, 2007
Tana Kenny*	Private Sector Business	Yes/Yes	Gadsden	2 years/June 2, 2007
Erica Uzzell*	Private Sector	Yes/Yes	Leon	2 years/June 2, 2007
Lynn Black*	Private Sector Business	Yes/Yes	Wakulla	2 year/September 20, 207

*Member who's term was renewed at the September 25, 2007 Coalition Board Meeting; the new term extends to September 25, 2009.

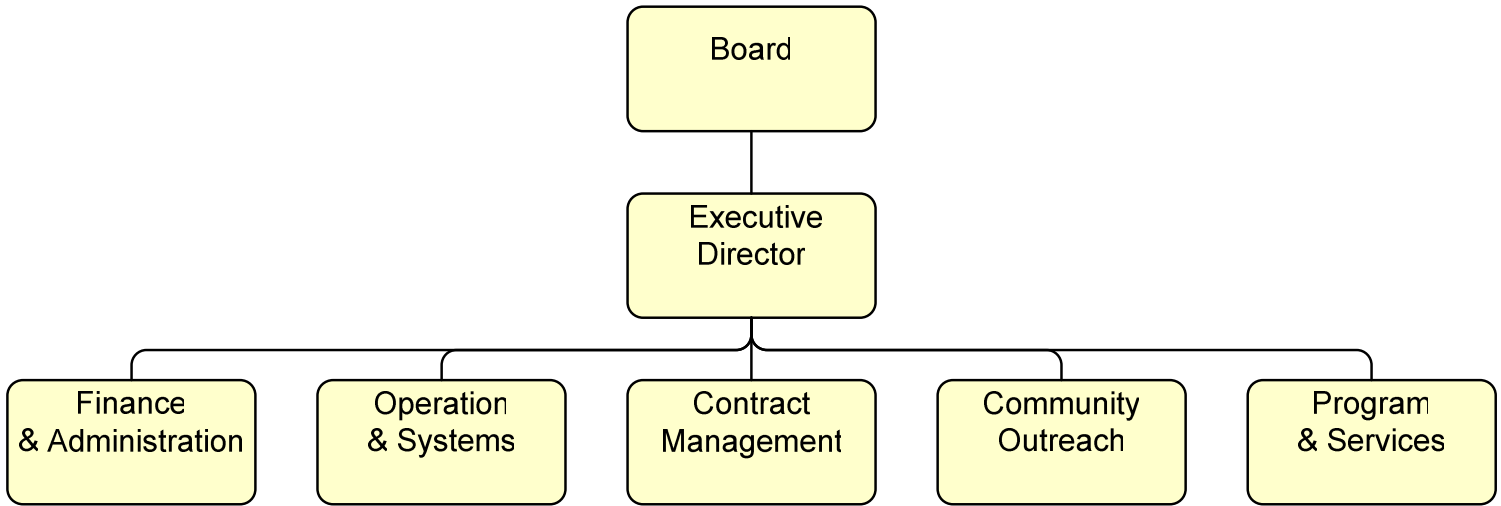
**Member who's term was not renewed at the September 25, 2007 Coalition Board Meeting.

APPENDIX C—COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Executive Committee				
Name	Office	Mandatory/ Voting	Affiliation	Term/Ends
Chris L. Jensen, Jr.	Chair	Yes/Yes	Regions Bank	4 years/April 30, 2009
Maureen Daughton	Vice Chair	Yes/Yes	Leon	2 years/July 1, 2008
Kimberly Moore	Treasurer, Finance Chair	Yes/Yes	Workforce Board (Leon, Wakulla & Gadsden)	2 years/September 20, 2007
Ed Feaver	Secretary	No/Yes	Private Consultant- Gadsden	3 years/September 20, 2007
Dr. Elsie Burton	Program Quality Chair	Yes/Yes	Leon	3 years/July 1, 2007
Beverly Owens	Governance Chair	Yes/No	Leon County School District	2 years/July 1, 2008
Linda Benedict	Community Outreach Chair			**This is a non-board member who serves as a committee member only.
Governance Committee				
Name	Office	Mandatory/ Voting	Affiliation	Term/Ends
Beverly Owens	Chair	Yes/No	Leon County School District	2 years/July 1, 2008
Tony Zarba	N/A	No/Yes	Taylor	2 years/June 28, 2007
Kenneth Armstrong	N/A	No/Yes	CEO, United Way of the Big Bend—Leon	2 years/July 1, 2008
Maureen Daughton	N/A	Yes/Yes	Leon	2 years/July 1, 2008
Sheila Shelton	N/A	Yes/Yes	Board of county commissioners appointee	2 years/September 20, 2007
Lynn Black	N/A	Yes/Yes	Wakulla	2 year/September 20, 207
Dr. Barbara Sloan	N/A	Yes/Yes	President of a community college, or designee	2 years/July 1, 2008
Finance Committee				
Name	Office	Mandatory/ Voting	Affiliation	Term/Ends
Kimberly Moore	Chair	Yes/Yes	Workforce Board (Leon, Wakulla & Gadsden)	2 years/September 20, 2007
Joyce Bethea	N/A	No/Yes	Madison	2 years/September 20, 2007
Ina Padgett	N/A	No/Yes	Taylor	2 years/June 28, 2007
Shannon Jacobs	N/A	Yes/Yes	Health Department (Jefferson)	N/A
Dorothy Inman- Johnson	N/A			**This is a non-board member who serves as a committee member only.

Program Committee				
Name	Office	Mandatory/ Voting	Affiliation	Term/Ends
Dr. Elsie Burton	Chair	Yes/Yes	Leon	3 years/July 1, 2007
Ed Feaver	Secretary	No/Yes	Private Consultant-Gadsden	3 years/September 20, 2007
Catherine McRae	N/A	Yes/No	Leon County School Board (FDLRS)	2 years/March 14, 2008
Sheryl Water	N/A			**This is a non-board member who serves as a committee member only.
Joe Alexander	N/A	Yes/Yes	Local Licensing Agency (all counties)	N/A
Sabrina Parga	N/A	Yes/No	Private provider representative	2 years/September 20, 2007
Janice L. Brown	N/A	Yes/No	DCF (all counties)	N/A
Kimberly Scott	N/A			**This is a non-board member who serves as a committee member only.
Community Development Committee				
Name	Office	Mandatory/ Voting	Affiliation	Term/Ends
Linda Benedict	Chair			**This is a non-board member who serves as a committee member only.
Janice Sumner	N/A	Yes/Yes	United Country Realty	3 years/April 30, 2008
Sarah McElroy	N/A	Yes/No	Faith-based provider representative	2 years/September 20, 2007
Pam Butler	N/A	No/Yes	Aegis Computer Service, Inc.—Leon	2 years/June 28, 2008
Ellen Lauricella	N/A	No/Yes	Private Consultant—Gadsden	2 years/June 28, 2008
Cynthia James	N/A	No/No	Family Home Provider-Madison	2 year/September 20, 207
Erica Uzzell	N/A	Yes/Yes	Leon	2 years/June 2, 2007
Tana Kenny	N/A	Yes/Yes	Gadsden	2 years/June 2, 2007

APPENDIX D—COALITION ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



Coalition Organizational Chart submitted with Self Assessment on August 14, 2007.

APPENDIX E—COALITION PRINCIPAL CONTRACTS FOR 2006–2007

Contractor	Services Provided	Contract Period	Contract Amount
Arbor Education & Training	Child Care Resource and Referral, School Readiness and Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten: Enrollment, Eligibility, Provider Payments and Monitoring	July 1, 2006-June 30, 2007	\$23,594,639
Leon County School District	School Readiness: Quality Services, Health and Developmental Screenings and Referrals	July 1, 2006-June 30, 2007	\$185,574
Taylor County School District	School Readiness: Quality Services, Health and Developmental Screenings and Referrals	July 1, 2006-June 30, 2007	\$98,336
Liberty County School District	School Readiness: Quality Services	July 1, 2006-June 30, 2007	\$31,983
Madison County School District	School Readiness: Quality Services	July 1, 2006-June 30, 2007	\$28,055
Wakulla County School District	School Readiness: Quality Services	July 1, 2006-June 30, 2007	\$20,280

Master Contract List submitted with Self Assessment on August 14, 2007.